

Song of Solomon 1:10

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Thy cheeks are comely with rows of jewels, thy neck with chains of gold.

Analysis

The bridegroom continues praising the bride: **Thy cheeks are comely with rows of jewels, thy neck with chains of gold.** The Hebrew 'lechayayikh batorim' (לחייך בתרים, your cheeks with ornaments) and 'tsavareyikh bacharuzim' (צאריך בחרוזים, your neck with strings of beads) describe adorned beauty. The 'rows of jewels' (torim, תרים) likely refers to beaded ornaments or plaited jewelry worn on the cheeks or head, while 'chains of gold' (charuzim, חרוֹזִים) denotes necklaces or string-work of precious metal.

The beloved celebrates both natural beauty (cheeks, neck) and cultivated adornment (jewelry). This teaches that godly love appreciates the beloved's inherent worth and also delights in efforts to beautify. The bride has prepared herself, adorning herself for her beloved's pleasure. Spiritually, this represents the Church adorning herself with righteous deeds, virtues, and holiness for Christ (Revelation 19:7-8). The 'fine linen' of the bride is 'the righteousness of saints'—believers cultivate beauty through sanctification, adorning themselves for their Beloved.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern brides wore elaborate jewelry—head ornaments, earrings, nose rings, necklaces, bangles. Jewelry signified wealth, status, and festivity. The bridegroom's appreciation of the bride's adornment affirms her efforts to beautify herself for him. In patriarchal culture where women's value was often diminished,

the beloved's detailed, appreciative praise affirms the bride's dignity and worth. Early church fathers saw the Church adorning herself with virtues—faith, hope, love, patience, kindness—making herself beautiful for Christ. The Reformers distinguished between self-righteous works (claiming merit) and sanctified living (grateful response to grace)—believers don't earn salvation but do 'adorn the doctrine' (Titus 2:10). The Puritans taught that while inner beauty surpasses outward adornment (1 Peter 3:3-4), appropriate attention to physical appearance within marriage honors one's spouse. Modern application affirms that spouses should cultivate both inner character and outward appearance as expressions of love and honor.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How are you 'adorning' yourself—cultivating both inner character and appropriate outward presentation—for Christ or for your spouse?
2. What 'jewels' of virtue and holiness is God developing in you to beautify His Church?

Interlinear Text

בְּחִרְצִים: צָאֵר נֶגֶד יְמִינְךָ יְמִינְךָ לְפָנֵיךְ
are comely Thy cheeks with rows of jewels thy neck with chains
H4998 H3895 H8447 H6677 H2737

Additional Cross-References

1 Peter 3:4: But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.

Genesis 24:47: And I asked her, and said, Whose daughter art thou? And she said, The daughter of Bethuel, Nahor's son, whom Milcah bare unto him: and I put the earring upon her face, and the bracelets upon her hands.

Song of Solomon 5:13: His cheeks are as a bed of spices, as sweet flowers: his lips like lilies, dropping sweet smelling myrrh.

Proverbs 1:9: For they shall be an ornament of grace unto thy head, and chains about thy neck.

Genesis 24:22: And it came to pass, as the camels had done drinking, that the man took a golden earring of half a shekel weight, and two bracelets for her hands of ten shekels weight of gold;

Genesis 41:42: And Pharaoh took off his ring from his hand, and put it upon Joseph's hand, and arrayed him in vestures of fine linen, and put a gold chain about his neck;

Numbers 31:50: We have therefore brought an oblation for the LORD, what every man hath gotten, of jewels of gold, chains, and bracelets, rings, earrings, and tablets, to make an atonement for our souls before the LORD.

Song of Solomon 4:9: Thou hast ravished my heart, my sister, my spouse; thou hast ravished my heart with one of thine eyes, with one chain of thy neck.